

A
L E T T E R
TO
THE COMMITTEE
OF
THE REV. PAUL SAUMAREZ,
A W A R D
OF
THE HIGH COURT OF CHANCERY.

Talia fando quæ vidi et quorum pars magna fui.

LONDON:
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1839.

TO THE READER.

So long as the Court of Chancery connives at Solicitors being Committees and Trustees to the property of individuals said to be of unsound mind, or permits an afflicted person's recovery to depend upon the professional treatment of the medical practitioner in whose house he is placed, what chance of recovery can he have so long as he possesses property? The proportions of the restoration of pauper Lunatics is forty in one hundred—of persons in Lunatic Asylums, not paupers, fourteen in one hundred—and of Chancery Lunatics not one in a hundred.

Persons not initiated in the proceedings of that Court can have no idea of the wickedness of the whole machinery, or that I am prevented even seeing my brother except in the presence of an attendant; but those who may be surprised that I have not occasionally offered to my own brother in my own house an asylum, should know that by the tender mercies of the Court he is forbid to pass even a night under my roof; and though the Master William Brougham, has thought proper to advise this order in direct opposition to the opinions of Sir W. Blizard, Dr Walshman, Dr Clutterbuck, and other eminent physicians, he did not forbid that my brother might wholly reside with a person of the lower order of society, married to a sister of one of the Committee, and who is a Solicitor to Lord Brougham. My opposition to the continuance of my brother there was the commencement of proceedings ^{by my sister} to remove me from the power of offering to a brother a brother's protection.

Should the painful publicity I am driven to give to my brother's case induce her Majesty's Government to erect a court for the protection of Lunatics, and remove those duties from the inefficient protection of the Court of Chancery, it will be rewarded by an immense patronage, and will confer greater blessings to the suffering portion of the community than any previous administration has effected.



45, Hans Place, Sloane Street,
March 9, 1839.

GENTLEMEN,

THE Lord Chancellor having appointed you Committee to my brother, it is a duty I owe to him to express my hope—and until I am made to feel the contrary, my conviction—that you will adopt every measure that is essential for his recovery; to the end that, if possible, he may be re-established in his rights, and the sphere of society, from which he has been so long estranged.

It is very evident, in order to effect this, it is essential that you should be acquainted with the origin of his disease, of which, I fear, Mr Stevenson has shown either an entire ignorance, or a perversion of the truth relative to it.

In early life, and for a long series of years, my brother's mind developed strong natural powers, therefore an inference may safely be drawn, that the present derangement does not arise from any natural defect—one with which he was born—but that it is the result of an influence wholly abstracted from natural mania, or what is called, hereditary disease.

Upon looking at my unfortunate brother, there are evident eruptions of the skin spreading over the substance of the *face* body. This will arise from two causes, checked perspiration, and the absence of sexual intercourse at that period of life when nature resists the attempts of man to place himself in a position contrary to the end for which he is created. *These are no longer eruptions* An improper quantity of calomel taken unnecessarily, I may further add; Dr Wilkinson, (after two years professional attendance,) was much inclined to think that the eruptions of the face may have been founded upon these grounds. As the fact is now fully authenticated, that mental derangement is the effect of organic disease; and if we look back to the period when my brother's indisposition first assumed a serious form, and examine the state of his body at that period—and the measures he took to remedy it—and the medium in which he

was placed—and the excitement to which he was exposed—nothing is more simple than to account for the cause; for the functions of the brain are so intimately connected with the uterine system, that the interruption of any one process which the latter has to perform in the human economy may implicate the former; and as, in this case, the sympathy with the sexual nerves was violently called into action by confinement in a lunatic asylum, that the disease assumed a more serious form of derangement than it otherwise would have done.

Be assured, Gentlemen, notwithstanding the false and unnatural statement of Mrs Charlotte Dobree and her two sisters to the contrary, the assertion of Mrs Gimingham's that I had the full confidence of my father as relates to this brother, is fully borne out; indeed, the last words he uttered to me were accompanied by a request to meet him in London for the purpose of ameliorating those sufferings to which my brother had been too long most cruelly subjected.

When I left London in 1830, my brother had asked leave of absence from his living in consequence of ill health: he was then labouring under considerable excitement upon different matters, occasioned by an improper use of bougees having irregularly acted upon the whole nervous system, an event which Dr Sutherland has assured me is one of no uncommon occurrence.

In one of the hallucinations, which is a symptom of the disease, (while in his sister's house,) he awoke at night with oppression at his chest in consequence of sleeping in a room without a fire-place, and where the air was consequently more confined than he had been accustomed to. Instead of opening his door, he threw up the window and called out to the watch for help, as he felt himself suffocating. The servants were alarmed, and the poor fellow's excitement kept up by the fears of Mr and Mrs Gimingham, in whose house the circumstance occurred. A keeper from a madhouse was sent for; and from that hour a gentleman, a magistrate, and one possessing many of the most noble attributes of his nature, was

deprived of the exercise of his social rights, and tossed about according to the selfish views of interested parties.

Upon my visiting London in 1831, I learned he was in the lunatic asylum, called Cooper House, kept by a Mr Symmonds, at Brompton. Mr Gimingham I found had the entire surveillance of him and his property; and I further found that Mr Symmonds was of opinion that a milder course of treatment than that of a lunatic asylum was desirable. I have a letter from Dr Symmonds of 1831, wherein he alludes to the impropriety of "*my brothers' being exposed to the contagion of persons worse than themselves;*" also of the advantages of placing about them "a person of superior habits, mind, and intelligence, whose business should be to be constantly with them; and who, by continually keeping up other ideas, would at least prevent their minds sinking into a lower state of imbecility, and in a great measure prevent the necessity of coercion and RESTRAINT, which I *am confident is scarcely ever necessary.*" I was further informed that my agitated parent forbid all communication relative to his son, except through Mr Gimingham, whose brother-in-law by this time occupied and still retains my *brother's parsonage*; and whose other connection superseded my brother's solicitor. As I doubted that Mr Symmonds could have ever stated the above opinion to Mr Gimingham, he gave me the two letters, copies of which are to be found in the first proceedings on the appointment of Committees; and the one relative to Mr Symmonds's opinion was by me put into Mr Gimingham's hands, who has ever since forfeited either my confidence or respect by his then refusing to forward it to my father.

The means I pursued to awaken my father to the error of my brother's treatment had ultimately succeeded; and his intention was to have proceeded to London, and to place my brother under the highest professional advice, not for security, but for cure.

In accordance with these views, upon his melancholy and untimely death, one of the Lord Chancellor's physicians was

*The
Rev. A. M.*

consulted immediately after having made his professional visit to the place where my brother was confined; and upon this gentleman stating it was a doubt in his mind whether my brother was detained there for his own or the medical man's benefit, under whose care he then was, Mr Leman was constrained to assent to his immediate removal.

It was delightful to witness the gratification my brother evinced to Dr W—— and myself as he quitted the threshold of the lunatic house proprietor, in whose establishment he had been for years confined; and leaped into an open phaeton in which he accompanied us by easy stages to the house of this gentleman at Bath. The same day, notwithstanding all the threats of danger with which that measure was assailed, the keeper was dismissed, from no other cause than that his attendance was found unnecessary: very soon afterwards the habit of unceasingly talking to himself much subsided, the voraciousness of his appetite diminished, and in proportion as his mind was diverted by other pursuits from dwelling upon those points connected with his disease, the power of his reason returned, and the mind assumed a more healthy appearance. It therefore became evidently desirable to place him where resources to divert his mind might be more easily obtained, until he can be restored to the discharge of his professional duties—this is a primary consideration, for a suitable occupation is essential to the health of every man, and without it he can scarcely have “*mens sana in corpore sano.*”

Extracts from Dr. W.'s early correspondence.

“ July 6, 1835.

“The first two or three days he confined himself principally to monosyllables; now he enters into conversation upon different subjects—still much remains to be done—his mind has been disturbed; and the other day he detailed to me very correctly all the circumstances connected with his affairs—the value of his land—the arable and pasture portion, &c.

“ C. W.”

“ *August 13, 1835.*

“ Indeed I do not know what I should do without the horse and carriage; it is invaluable. It is not only beneficial to him as to health, but amusing as to his thoughts. C. W.”

“ Being Sunday your brother read to me one of Mr Warner’s sermons, and in the evening he gave us some excellent illustrations of the genealogies of our Saviour as given by St. Matthew and Luke. He informed us that for four years he had been prevented reading, and various expressions evince the consciousness of the restraint he had so long laboured under. C. W.”

At the expiration of the twelvemonth, in consequence of the request of the other members of the committee, Dr W——, and his patient, came up to London for the purpose of a consultation with one of the Lord Chancellor’s visiting physicians, who again expressed his surprise at the improvement which had taken place within the year, and paid a no less just than flattering tribute to Dr W——’s judicious treatment of his invalid. That gentleman’s imperfect health—the impossibility of his residing from Bath, or of domiciling my brother, and the jealousy to which this amiable man had been exposed throughout the able course he had adopted, the judicious opinion of Dr S——y that change of residence might have a beneficial effect,—my brother’s wishes to remain in London, where he had, during a residence of six weeks, greatly checked his vociferations, while the amusements diverted his mind from dwelling upon his real or imaginary injuries,—are among the reasons for his removal from the country.

The Medical Report of Mr Stevenson, and my communications with the Lord Chancellor’s physicians in 1837, will throw a further light upon his position.

Ere the close of 1836, I had felt a different course should be pursued, and the trial made of my brother’s removal from the residence of Mr Stevenson* to a house ostensibly at his

* It is not surprising that Mr Stevenson has sworn an affidavit, the effects of which were to arrest my influence over my brother’s destinies.

own controul, with respectable persons to take care of him, and his affairs connected with it. Here I had to experience the too successful opposition of the interested parties by whom my brother was surrounded; however, as this is foreign to the subject of the course for his future treatment, I close this communication with a part of the correspondence which has taken place for my brother's restoration to his health and rights.

This period he should have returned to his learning, heally having no other excitement than a natural one.
To the Committee of the Rev. P. Saumarez.

“WHAT is the present state of the bodily and mental health of the Lunatic?”

THE present mental derangement of my patient consists in loud and incoherent talking, on subjects connected with the legislature, in invectives against official personages, and the occasional writing of violent letters to the Ministers, the Chancellor, the Bishops, and others, from whom he supposes he has received injury and oppression, by depriving him of his property and free agency. Except in these particulars, his mental faculties may be considered unobjectionable. The excitements alluded to seldom become manifest when the mind and body are healthily occupied; and they are always under the control of his medical attendants, or servants, in whose presence, as well as in the presence of company and strangers, appearance of aberration very seldom exists. He is treated and considered as one of the family in which he resides; and partakes of and uses all the advantages of the house and establishment in ordinary with the rest of the family, and this always with proper moderation. It is my opinion that his diseased mental excitement has diminished since under the present restrictions now followed. I consider him by no means unfit for the general society of life, as he is certainly capable of enjoying and estimating its benefits. He is of gentlemanly manners, kind and amiable disposition. ✕

His bodily health on the whole is good; he sleeps soundly, eats and drinks well, and takes great exercise without distress

or fatigue. He has a slight stricture of the urethra, which does not appear to give him much inconvenience.

“What is the mode of treatment?”

The treatment consists principally in endeavouring to regulate the action of impressions and ideas on the mind;—to manage to present to the mind those impressions only that are healthy, free from subjects of his aberration, and of a light and amusing character; which are at the same time mostly combined with exercise of body, and regularly varied in kind, so as always to keep alive his interest, and create moderate gratification. All subjects connected with himself individually, or with family business, or matters of former anxiety, and above all, the present subjects of his malady, are carefully avoided; whereby the old and diseased ideas become weakened, and new and healthy ones increased.

He is never left without some of those in charge of him being in his presence, or in immediate communication with him. His bodily health sometimes requires strong purgatives and alterative medicines, from which I have perceived evident benefit accrue to his mental disorder. Also I have forwarded to the Committee reports of my patient's state and treatment about once in every fortnight or three weeks, who afford me all the assistance in their power.

THOMAS STEVENSON, M.R.C.L.

37, Upper Grosvenor-st., Grosvenor-square,

July 17, 1837.

Hans Place, July 22, 1837.

GENTLEMEN,—In compliance with your request to have a report of any changes in my brother the Rev. P. Saumarez's complaint, it will be necessary to trace the features of the disease from the stages of excitement to those which caused the excitement—from the diseased state up to the healthy one, before any dates can be arrived at from which just conclusions can be drawn for remedying the affliction under which he is

labouring; because the same disease will often vary in the character of its symptoms.

Taking these principles as a basis, I have arrived at the conclusion that the disease is not innate, but is occasioned by the effects of a stricture having been improperly treated, by the incautious use of bougees. These acting upon the nervous system, first affected his hearing; and to the gleet which accompanied the complaint, and annoyed him for years, I attribute the subsequent derangement; for the functions of the brain are so intimately connected with the generative system, that the interruption of any one process which the latter has to perform in the human economy will in some instances implicate the former; and in this case the sympathy of them with the sexual nerves was so violently called into action, by confinement in a Lunatic Asylum, that the disease assumed a more serious form of derangement than it otherwise would have done. I am aware that symptoms of eccentricity or derangement had occasionally manifested themselves before this restraint was resorted to; but with some persons the passing of bougees will be attended with temporary delirium, especially when doses of calomel are at the same time administered; and great discrimination should be made between that which is disease and that which is the effect of treatment.

The symptoms of my brother's complaint, on his first removal from the care of the madhouse-keeper, you will find detailed in page 35 of my Treatise, which accompanies the report; and I have observed that in proportion to his restoration to the exercise of social rights, the baneful effects of past coercion are gradually subsiding. The features of his complaint are greatly altered.

For the last eighteen months, I have not heard him answer any question irrationally: at that time, the vociferations (which more resembled violent convulsions than loud talking) could not be arrested while the fit lasted; and they were so loud and long, that his residence in town was utterly impossible. Now, Mr Stevenson declares they are always under control, and are

arrested on the appearance of any one, or on the slightest interruption. A few days ago, when I called on my brother, he was thus declaiming; but upon our entering he left off, invited us to take tea, and during the whole evening preserved his usual mild and gentlemanly deportment.

The expressions of indignation against certain high characters, adduced as evidences of insanity, are less proofs than has been supposed; because he was told, when in the asylum, that they had seized his property, and made him legally a lunatic in consequence of his having addressed them, as Ministers, for his liberty; nor can it be expected that an impression thus inculcated for years can be obliterated in a day.

For the first several months since his release, Dr W.'s kind attempts to introduce him into company were attended by the necessity of removing him out of it. Now, he invariably conducts himself with propriety in company—I have been to parties of 200 persons with him this season. Then, he could not be trusted with money; now he has half-a-guinea a week pocket-money, which he expends with great caution. He can safely be confided with sums to pay his tradesmen's bills.

He has a greater control over his appetite than he had, and is now often observed reading the Prayers, and has been seen praying in private.

Notwithstanding all these favourable circumstances, still much remains to be done;—his mind has been much disturbed; he will often answer only in monosyllables; nor do I conceive it will recover its natural healthy state until he becomes a free agent to the extent of his capacities, which are now as it were under a shade which I hope may ere long be happily removed.

The fact of his writing letters to the Bishops and others having connexion with his interests, shows that the loss of his property and rights afflict him, though he may not talk much to those by whom he is surrounded on these subjects; and it becomes a question for consideration, whether it is right for him to be told that the parties are not at home, and to be

put off by similar excuses, a deception which, if he does not see through, can only have a temporary effect; but these considerations had better be referred to when the mode of treatment is under consideration.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your most obedient servant,
R. SAUMAREZ.

*To the Lord Chancellor's Physicians
in Lunacy.*

Hans Place, April 19, 1838.

GENTLEMEN,—Agreeable to your wish that I should state my views respecting my afflicted brother, permit me to assure you I do so with the greatest diffidence. I beg to observe all that I ever proposed has been to watch the real symptoms of the disease, have them submitted to the most experienced practitioners, and observe that this advice is carried into execution, so that every caution may be adopted, and no hasty or speculative measures be pursued.

It is yourselves, not me, Gentlemen, who are best judges how far I am competent to these duties.

Taking the outline of Mr Stevenson's report, confirmed by my own knowledge, the symptoms of disease consist of "a high nervous susceptibility connected with the Legislature, writing occasionally under excitement indignant letters to the Lord Chancellor, Bishop of London, &c., from whom he infers he has received oppression *by the privation* of his property and free agency." Except in these particulars his mental faculties may be considered unobjectionable.

"The excitements alluded to *seldom become manifest* when the mind and body are *healthily occupied*, and they are always under the controul of his medical attendants or servants, in whose presence, as well as in the presence of strangers, appearances of aberration *seldom exist*. He is by no means unfit for the general society of life, as he is certainly capable of enjoying and estimating its benefits. He is of gentlemanly manners and amiable disposition."

This, as I have already stated, was Mr Stevenson's report in July 1837. As you are desirous I should frankly communicate my opinion, it affords me much pleasure in assuring you I can best do so by adopting your own words, they being the echo of my long cherished sentiments.

My brother may be unfit to be left altogether to his own controul, and may be likely to be so for a considerable period; but as he displays intelligence, mildness of manners, and acuteness of feeling, it appears to me, and I submit to you, whether the period is arrived, contemplated by the former amiable medical gentlemen, Dr Wilkinson and Mr Muller, under whose care he was, that a controlled and restricted residence between London and his Parsonage may have a most beneficial effect, and that it should be adopted and regulated under the first medical practitioners.

To effect this, should it be approved of, the Bishop of London has informed me, by his secretary, that if Mr Saumarez is of gentlemanly manners and feeling, and is sufficiently under the controul of those about him, that nothing derogatory to his sacerdotal character may in all human probability be likely to occur, and that his return to his home may by analogy be beneficial, he will direct the Curate to give up to my brother the Parsonage House, which stands in extensive grounds, and is wholly detached from any other residence, and which he himself erected.

Should you be able to give the certificate required by his Lordship, the next step would be to arrange the domestic establishment at Easton, which should combine a gentleman experienced in the care of persons afflicted, horse and chaise, and man servant, &c.

To meet the expenses of a London residence, which might combine social intercourse with his family, and *which I deem indispensable for restoring the regulation of his affections*, I would give up to him my town residence for a twelvemonth, occupying it or not as you, Gentlemen, might deem it expedient; and in the first instance go with my brother, which

should and would be with his invitation to Easton, to see that his early visits might be healthily visited; but if you found objection to my house, another shall be provided.

The affectionate confidence you have seen evinced by my brother towards me, holds out a confident hope of success; and the greatest encouragement is further given to the adoption of this course from the report of Mr Stevenson, that my brother's excitements are seldom manifest when the mind and body are healthily occupied, and that they are always under controul.

A Curate on the living would continue to perform the clerical duties; while the excellent feelings of my brother's heart would be again exercised in benefiting his poor parishioners and himself, by having his mind properly directed; while the continual change of residence between Easton and London would be a check to the chances of excitement from such occupation. On the other hand, it is evident that any attempt of Mr Stevenson and others to divert the ruling passion of the mind, (that passion being a natural one,) has been transitory and fallacious; for to my observation, when in the most healthy state, his ideas revert to being kept from his home, and the knowledge of his affairs; for these reasons a residence at the house of a medical gentleman *appears highly objectionable*, rather than which he had better have a separate establishment; and I will conclude these remarks by observing he was cheerful and rational when at Dr Clutterbuck's house, because he was anticipating assistance, and experiencing momentary social kindness from his family.

The Sunday following, the naturally mild features of my brother's character were affected by having had before his view the picture of the long privations he had endured, and which arose upon hearing yours and Dr Southey's intended visit; the mind already exhausted by continually dwelling upon that one object, will wander *upon any other subjects* when the first exciting cause may be by any means worked upon, and will only return to a healthy state where the effect has subsided. Permit me to present to you, Gentlemen, the

assurance of my sincere respect and confidence, and that I am

Your's very respectfully,

R. SAUMAREZ.

To Dr. Southey, and

Dr. Clutterbuck.

The Report of Mr Stevenson has not alluded to certain inconsistent views my brother may now appear to have upon the subjects of patents, &c.; such eccentricities are the usual characteristics of persons whose nerves are affected by being under restraint; and the delusions in my brother's mind have been kept up, if not created, by Mr Stevenson's laying before my brother from time to time letters as coming from the Lord Chancellor, approving of his plans and of his marrying, &c. &c. These delusions, therefore, upon his removal may in all human probability be easily overcome; but after Dr Southey and Dr Clutterbuck had visited my brother, and Dr Clutterbuck had expressed a decided opinion for my brother's removal, to which Mr Lemon refused assent, I addressed the following letter to the Lord Chancellor's Physicians in Lunacy.

“ GENTLEMEN,—With a view of enabling you to account for the necessity I feel for your interference to protect my unfortunate brothers, I enclose you affidavits, which are in part the grounds of my distrust of Mr Stevenson; but I have still stronger ones, as my former letter to you must demonstrate.

“ A statement in Mr Stevenson's affidavits, “ that he had not seen the other Committee at his house,” shows how entirely my brothers are in his hands, and surrounded by *persons of his own selection*, by which any surveillance on my part is rendered nugatory, and myself prevented intercourse with either of them, except in the presence of an attendant.

“ It is for you, Gentlemen, to consider whether that intercourse my brother had formerly with me with so much benefit to himself has ceased to be essential, and should be arrested.

“ It is for you to consider whether my respectful representa-

tion of the complaints of my brother the clergyman, made to myself and a solicitor, are beyond your inquiry—and whether the earnest application of my brother to be removed from the house of a medical man should not be complied with—and whether the opinion of Dr Clutterbuck, with which Dr Southey is acquainted, as well as those of other experienced gentlemen, set forth in paper marked A, should not be carried into effect under my surveillance, as the most experienced relative, and nearest.

“I cannot close this letter without describing these cases of my afflicted brothers as instances of ill-treatment and persecution, no less calling for your interference than that of Mr Paternoster, which the Metropolitan Commissioners with so much honour to themselves inquired into.

“I am, Gentlemen,

“Your’s very respectfully,

“R. SAUMAREZ.

“*To the Lord Chancellor’s Physicians
in Lunacy.*

“The Documents being Originals, four in number, are requested to be returned, the Commissioners taking such copies as they may desire.”

Highly as I respect these Gentlemen, I regret that their powers are not adequate to make those inquiries; and when closing this Communication, I should be wanting in duty to my brother were I to neglect to call your attention to the affidavits of Messrs Greig, Muller, and Maybury, Surgeons, exclusive of those of the men servants, &c. I have also to add, that their opinion of the propriety of my brother being instantly removed from Mr Stevenson’s house, is not merely confirmed by my brother’s solicitations, but is corroborated by Dr Scot, late Surgeon and Superintendant of the Lunatics detained at Hasler, who visited my brother professionally only a few days ago, and to whose and Dr Clutterbuck’s opinions I refer you for further information. I am, &c. &c.

R. SAUMAREZ.

